

NOT VOTING—3

Duckworth Heinrich Manchin

Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock

Warren
Whitehouse
Wicker

Wyden
Young

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

NAYS—7

Barrasso
Cotton
Cruz

Hawley
Scott (FL)
Shelby

Tuberville

NOT VOTING—4

Heinrich
Lummis

Manchin
Thune

The nomination was confirmed.
(Ms. CORTEZ MASTO assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Nevada.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 1:45 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:47 p.m., recessed until 1:46 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Donet Dominic Graves, Jr., of Ohio, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Graves nomination?

Mr. CASSIDY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. BLUNT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) would have voted "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 191 Ex.]

YEAS—89

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Baldwin | Fischer | Murkowski |
| Bennet | Gillibrand | Murphy |
| Blackburn | Graham | Murray |
| Blumenthal | Grassley | Ossoff |
| Blunt | Hagerty | Padilla |
| Booker | Hassan | Paul |
| Boozman | Hickenlooper | Peters |
| Braun | Hirono | Portman |
| Brown | Hoeven | Reed |
| Burr | Hyde-Smith | Risch |
| Cantwell | Inhofe | Romney |
| Capito | Johnson | Rosen |
| Cardin | Kaine | Rounds |
| Carper | Kelly | Rubio |
| Casey | Kennedy | Sanders |
| Cassidy | King | Sasse |
| Collins | Klobuchar | Schatz |
| Coons | Lankford | Schumer |
| Cornyn | Leahy | Scott (SC) |
| Cortez Masto | Lee | Shaheen |
| Cramer | Lujan | Sinema |
| Crapo | Markey | Smith |
| Daines | Marshall | Stabenow |
| Duckworth | McConnell | Sullivan |
| Durbin | Menendez | Tester |
| Ernst | Merkley | Tillis |
| Feinstein | Moran | Toomey |

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT
AGREEMENT—S. 1260

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to file cloture on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 58, S. 1260.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENDLESS FRONTIER ACT—MOTION
TO PROCEED

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 58, S. 1260.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 58, S. 1260, a bill to establish a new Directorate for Technology and Innovation in the National Science Foundation, to establish a regional technology hub program, to require a strategy and report on economic security, science, research, innovation, manufacturing, and job creation, to establish a critical supply chain resiliency program, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 58, S. 1260, a bill to establish a new Directorate for Technology and Innovation in the National Science Foundation, to establish a regional technology hub program, to require a strat-

egy and report on economic security, science, research, innovation, manufacturing, and job creation, to establish a critical supply chain resiliency program, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Maria Cantwell, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tina Smith, Jeanne Shaheen, John W. Hickenlooper, Michael F. Bennet, Patty Murray, Tammy Baldwin, Raphael G. Warnock, Christopher Murphy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Jacky Rosen, Ben Ray Lujan, Richard J. Durbin, Tim Kaine, Jeff Merkley, Gary C. Peters, Catherine Cortez Masto

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

ECONOMY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am here on the floor to talk about the economy, what is going on, on the jobs front, and where we go from here.

Last week, the Department of Labor issued its most recent jobs report. It showed that we added 266,000 jobs in April. That was about one quarter of what was predicted. It was disappointing. It shows that the job growth coming out of the pandemic has now slowed. There is a question as to why, since there are so many jobs out there. How is it that there can be so many jobs available, and yet we have such a disappointing April jobs report? The demand for workers is certainly high.

The other thing going on out there is that we have creeping inflation. We learned this past week that the Consumer Price Index rose 4.2 percent between April 2020 and April 2021. So the year, April to April, is the highest 12-month increase going back to the summer of 2008.

There is this whole debate going on about whether there is inflation or not. Well, I would ask you to talk to your constituents because they will tell you there is inflation. There is inflation at the gas pump; there is inflation at the grocery store; there is inflation if you are trying to build something. There is inflation throughout the economy right now, and that should concern every American. It is because of policy choices, but it doesn't have to be this way.

What this argument boils down to with regard to jobs and with regard to inflation are really two very different approaches and philosophies of government and how to create jobs, how to increase wages, and how to help working families.

The Biden administration believes the government needs to spend more to prime the pump. This is despite our being told by every economic analysis, including our own nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, that without any new stimulus at the beginning of this year, we were going to see the economy come back strongly. In fact, all of the studies showed that the rate of growth this year was going to be 4 percent or more without any stimulus, without any new spending, and that, by

midyear, according to the Congressional Budget Office, we would be back to the prepandemic economy and economic growth. Yet the Biden administration is insisting on priming the pump, putting more money out there. The \$1.9 trillion spending package was all about that.

Some of us raised concerns about it and warned people about this. By the way, one of us who did this was Larry Summers, who was the Secretary of the Treasury under a Democratic administration and who is a prominent economist on the other side of the aisle. He said this—and he was right—that this risked overheating an economy that was already growing and would result in inflation. Unfortunately, the massive stimulus seems to have exactly done that.

Unfortunately, now there is another wave of spending that is being projected. Over \$4 trillion is being proposed in new spending in addition to the \$1.9 trillion, two new packages the President talked about in his address to Congress last month. It is interesting because, even though inflation is going up and even though the jobs market is disappointing, it seems like the administration isn't changing course.

One thing the administration is not changing course on is that it wants to continue to pay people a substantial amount not to work. Now, in my view, during the COVID-19 crisis—at the heat of it—we needed to do something to help people who had lost their jobs through no fault of their own, and the States' unemployment systems were the places to do that. So we added a Federal supplement on top of the State unemployment benefit.

In Ohio, the State pays about \$360 a week, on average, which is about half of whatever your salary was or your income was, and we added \$300 on top of that. Think about that. Instead of \$360, it is \$660 per week, on average. That means that, for 42 percent of the people who are on unemployment insurance—this is a national figure—they are making more on unemployment than they were at work. So a lot of people have made the logical decision and say: Why should I be going back to work?

Unfortunately, when the President has been asked about this, he has said:

I know there's been a lot of discussion . . . that people are being paid to stay home rather than going to work. Well, we don't see much evidence of that.

With all due respect, I hope the President will talk to some of the business owners who I am talking to, particularly small businesses. The numbers tell a different story.

According to the most recent Labor Department data released just this week, at the end of March, we had 8.1 million job openings in America. That was 8.1 million jobs open. We all know that because we are back in our States, as we will be later today or tomorrow, and we will see the "help wanted" signs. By the way, that is the highest number in history. We have never had 8 million jobs open in America.

Based on this Labor Department study, the job increases were broadly distributed, 185,000 new job openings in restaurants and hospitality—as they are getting going, many of these restaurants are saying: This is great. We have the people coming back, but we can't find workers. There are 155,000 in State and local education and 81,000 in entertainment.

With that demand for workers and the coronavirus pandemic substantially improving, the employment numbers should be skyrocketing. We should be seeing so many people going back to work. This is an opportunity for people to go back, to get into their careers, and get back to the dignity and self-respect that comes from work and the fulfillment that comes from work, but it is not happening. If you ask business owners in my home State of Ohio and across the country, they will all tell you the same story: Business is booming, but we can't find workers.

One Ohio restaurant manager said in an interview, "It's crazy. Honestly, we are busier than we were before COVID," but they can't find staff to keep up with the demand. The Dayton, OH, area chamber of commerce did a study very recently, and 78 percent of its members said they can't find the workers they need to fill the job openings they have—78 percent.

So why is this happening? I think there are a few reasons.

One is that it is true that we still have a skills gap in our country, and that is something I have been working on, along with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. It is the reason I authored what is called the JOBS Act. It was to make sure that we have this connection—not have a skills gap but, instead, have the right skills being taught to match the work needs that we have.

Honestly, with regard to those numbers that I just talked about with regard to entertainment jobs and restaurant jobs and State and local education jobs, most of those jobs do not require a specialized skill. So the skills gap needs to be addressed, particularly in manufacturing, where I was told today, by the National Association of Manufacturers, that there are 700,000 manufacturing jobs open right now. Again, many of the jobs that are open do not require advanced skills. They just require you to show up and to be willing to do the work.

It is also understandable to me that some people may be hesitant to go back to work because of COVID, but we now have these three effective vaccines that are doing the hard work to try to get us back to a more normal lifestyle, where we can get back to school and back to church and back to synagogue and back to work. Our Nation's researchers and scientists have helped us to get to this point, and as we saw from the CDC recommendation today regarding masks, we are turning the corner.

I also realize, for some people, childcare is an issue—there is no question about that—the cost of childcare. If you look at the numbers in terms of people going back to work, it is true that it is disproportionately women. I agree that this is an issue, but I will tell you that one of the issues we hear about, as you dig deeper into this, is that it is because, in many places, the kids are not back to school. So that is a solvable problem. It is time for our children to go back to school again. Follow the CDC. Follow the science. There were 54 percent of K-8 public schools that were offering full-time classroom teaching in March. The rest were not.

I have to tell you that none of these are the main causes of the current problem from everything I am hearing. There are jobs, and there are folks qualified to do them. They just aren't looking for work, and it is because of the way the government has chosen to pay people not to work.

Wages are up, by the way. So, for those who say, "Well, employers need to raise wages," they are up. By the way, that is one reason we have inflation. It is because wages are going up. Wages going up, I think, is not a bad thing even though it will count for some of this inflation that we have, but the wages going up is not going to make the difference here. Even though wages have gone up on an average of 4, 5 percent, people are still not coming to work the way you would expect.

Jimmy John's is offering hiring bonuses. The McDonald's locally, where I live in Cincinnati, is offering a \$500 signing bonus. Chipotle is offering free college tuition after 4 months on the job. One wholesale distributor in Ohio is offering a \$9,000 sign-on bonus for certified truck drivers.

By the way, with regard to truck drivers, you know about the Colonial Pipeline and cutting off the gas supply to the east coast of the United States and people who are concerned about going to the gas station and getting gas in many gas stations and not having any fuel available, including in States all over the East and the Southeast.

The answer that some people came up with—and it makes sense—is to have trucks actually deliver that fuel to those gas stations. The trucks could go to the places where the fuel is and where the pipeline would normally take it and move that fuel to the gas stations. The problem? No truck drivers. They literally cannot find truck drivers to move this fuel from the depots to the gas stations. This is a real problem.

I have a constituent back home who contacted me yesterday. She is offering a \$1,000 signing bonus, and she can get nobody to step forward. She has 60 jobs in Ohio, and she has 30 jobs in New York—a small business with only about 250 jobs total. She can't find anybody. When she talks to her people, they tell her: Well, as soon as the UI

ends, I will be back. As soon as the unemployment insurance ends—the Federal supplement, the \$300 supplement—I will be back. Businesses simply can't compete in an environment where more than 40 percent of the workers are making more on the unemployment supplement than they would be at their jobs.

It is a problem, by the way, that States themselves are now starting to deal with because they realize this is a huge problem for their economies, for their small businesses, and for their workforces. As of this afternoon, just in the last week, 15 States have said: Do you know what? I am not going to accept the \$300 supplement because I want to get people back to work.

It is already making a difference. Someone just told me from the State of Montana—one of our colleagues from there—and Montana was the first State to do this—that, about a week ago, a hotel owner told him that he was in desperate need of people, and when he would put the “help wanted” sign out and ask people to come, he could get one person to show up per week. This week, 60 people showed up. Why? Because the unemployment insurance is running out, and people are now looking for work. So these States I think are going to continue to do this. I think it will be more than 15 by the time we are finished speaking here this afternoon. It is because the States realize, well, this is a competitive advantage. If New York doesn't do it and Ohio does—and by the way, Ohio is one of the States that just made the decision to do it this afternoon. If New York doesn't do it, that businessperson I talked about is going to do more manufacturing in Ohio because that is where she has the workforce. That will help Ohio relative to States that wouldn't choose to move on beyond the \$300 supplement.

Unemployment insurance is important, and it is still going to be there, but it will be the State benefit that it has always been.

The other thing is the work requirement. In unemployment insurance, again, in Ohio, it is about 50 percent of whatever your wages are. And then there is a requirement that you look for work, and if you get an offer, you can't stay on unemployment insurance. That has always been the tradition.

Under COVID, States accepted waivers not to have to require people to look for work. About 30 States now just in the last few weeks have decided to get rid of that waiver, including Ohio. Why? Because again, it is not helping anybody. It is not helping the workers; it is not helping the small businesses, certainly; and it is really not helping the taxpayers who are paying tens of billions of dollars for these supplements.

I will say, when I debated this on the Senate floor, when we had an amendment that actually passed during the COVID-19 legislation—later, that amendment was amended, but we tried

to end the unemployment insurance sooner given the economic numbers that were out there.

One of the Democratic colleagues on the other side said that—do I think the Ohio workers somehow don't have a work ethic, that they are lazy? That is not what I think at all. I don't think they are lazy at all. I think they are logical. Common sense dictates that when you are offering to pay somebody more not to work than to work, you are likely to get a bad result. Again, it was needed when people were losing their jobs through no fault of their own. COVID-19 devastated—ravaged—so many sectors of our economy.

A lot of those sectors are coming back and are coming back strong, but they need workers, and they need them desperately. The stakes couldn't be higher.

Let me illustrate why. If workers don't go back to work, some businesses will actually close, and these jobs will go away permanently. That, to me, is a reality.

Take Geordie's Restaurant in Columbus, OH. Geordie's shut down a couple of weeks ago because they couldn't find enough job applicants to keep the lights on, period. They shut down. This is a restaurant that made it through the worst of the pandemic, when our restaurant and hospitality industry was in really tough shape. But as owner Geordie Hull-Jones said himself, “We fought hard to get through COVID, but COVID didn't kill us, the stimulus did.”

“[B]ut COVID didn't kill us, the stimulus did.” That is a quote from a business owner.

That is the difference, again, between the philosophy that the Biden administration seems to be taking and, frankly, the reality and the philosophy that we are encouraging, which is let's get people back to work; let's get this economy moving again.

The President is committed to spending an unprecedented amount of tax dollars to try and get what it takes to get the economy back on track. But spending more tax dollars isn't a prescription for what ails our economy today. Getting people back to work certainly is. If we don't, again, businesses will close; careers cannot be continued. People won't get the fulfillment that they get from going to work, and many of these jobs will not return.

Instead of following this path, let's change course. Let's follow common sense and get our country back to work so we can all enjoy the goods and services we work to provide for each other. Let's help our Nation's small businesses, which are the lifeblood of so many in our economy. Let's help people currently on unemployment get started building lasting careers that they enjoy, make a living, find long-term stability, so they can realize their American dream. That is what this country is all about.

So, today, I am urging the Biden administration to take two simple steps

to encourage people to move past the pandemic and to get back to work. First, we need to reimplement the Federal requirement that people must be actively searching for work if they are going to receive unemployment. Again, Ohio has made that decision, as have about 30 other States, but let's make this the national standard that it was prior to the pandemic. Long-term unemployment doesn't benefit anyone, and it will ensure that people are able to get off unemployment insurance more quickly. Second, we need to draw down the Federal unemployment supplement funded by COVID-19 that passed in March. It is time to look at ending this not on September 6, as it is currently slated to end, but now, while the economy is strong and growing and we are trying to get people back to work. As I said, it is a rational economic decision for many people right now who collect an unemployment check that effectively pays upward of \$15 an hour to stay at home and not work, but it makes no sense to keep the supplement in place as we are re-opening, and the focus is on shifting toward getting the economy back up and running.

My own preference is that some of this might be used to pay people a bonus to go back to work. I know that is controversial on my side of the aisle, but, I tell you, I think it works. Montana is doing it, and it is working for them. How about 100 bucks a week? Instead of the \$300 supplement, 100 bucks a week for 6 weeks as a return-to-work bonus? To me, that makes a lot of sense. That would be something I think we could get some bipartisan support for around here, and that would help the workers, the small businesses, and our economy.

Through these two steps, we can create the disincentive to work that was a byproduct of our response to an unprecedented pandemic—we can stop that disincentive to work. Now that we are beating COVID-19, we should focus on getting back to normal. I urge the Biden administration to focus on getting the economy back up and running and getting folks off the sidelines and back to work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I want to be able to comment on my colleague, Senator PORTMAN, and some of the comments he has made about unemployment.

My State is not one of those States yet that has made the decision to be able to end the additional unemployment benefits that are coming from the Federal Government, and it is harming workers and it is harming jobs and it is harming businesses in my State. And I hope in the days ahead, my State will be one of those States to be able to step up and will say—and I believe my Governor will—to be able to step up and say: Let's actually make sure we are benefiting families long-term.

There is a whole group of folks who believe that if you only give people enough money, that is going to help them rise out of poverty. People need a job. People need a purpose. People need a plan to be able to do that. Folks don't need long-term Government benefits to be able to help sustain that. They need a way to be able to help earn a living to be able to pass it on to their family to set a job record for them and to set a path for their kids and grandkids after them. That helps people rise—every study we have seen on how to help people rise out of poverty, graduate high school, wait till after marriage to have kids, and have a job of any type. Let's help people rise. Let's help people be employed and engaged. That is a helpful thing.

I think about some of the things that are happening even today. Secretary Mayorkas was in front of our committee today, and it was shocking to me to hear the Secretary of Homeland Security talk about how much more efficient they have become at processing people at the border and getting them into the country.

It used to be our evaluation for how we were managing Border Patrol and Customs and Border Protection was how many people we were stopping at the border and returning to their home country. He, literally, over and over again, articulated how much faster they are now at processing people at the border and releasing them into the country. Even at one point when I challenged him and said: I understand people are being released into the country without even a notice to appear; that they are just being released into the country and told to go to a place somewhere in the country, self-report themselves to an ICE office and say: I would like to get a court order to be able to have a notice to appear.

At that point, I said: How many people have been treated that way?

He said: I am not sure.

Well, I have already looked up the record on it. It is 19,000 just in the past couple of months who have been brought across the border, released into the country, and told just self-report yourself to whatever ICE agent you see somewhere in the country.

I asked the simple question: How many people have already done that?

Not only could he not answer the number 19,000, which we have confirmed, but he didn't know how many people had actually turned themselves in and actually done it. But we continue to do this. It was all about speed of moving people who are crossing the border into the country rather than actually managing our border. And even something as simple as just the gaps in the fence, they are still, as he said to me, "studying" whether they are going to close the gaps in the fence.

We have a gas pipeline that has gone down due to a ransomware attack. It reminded me, again, of how important gas pipelines are all over our Nation, and it is interesting to me that on day

one, one of the first things that President Biden did was he stepped in and ended the Keystone Pipeline moving through here and is now actively working to be able to shut down all pipeline construction around the country.

Can I remind Americans, especially Americans on the East Coast, what it means to lose a pipeline?

When the President says we are not going to do more pipelines, that means we have no redundancy; that if a pipeline goes down, there is not an additional backup one in construction to be able to get there. It is better to have multiple pipelines in the area so that if one goes down, you still have other fuel supplies.

What if this pipeline had actually been a larger scale issue even than a ransomware attack, as bad as that is? This whole fight that we are having about pipelines suddenly makes sense to a whole lot of folks on the East Coast who can't get gasoline. Pipelines are not evil. Pipelines are moving energy across the country, and it is the least expensive, safest way to be able to move that energy across the country.

This week, of all weeks, has been interesting to have a dialogue about S. 1. It was a long markup in the Rules Committee to be able to talk about voting in America.

Now, I was at the White House several years ago when the FIRST STEP Act was signed. It was a remarkable bill dealing with criminal justice reform. As I was at the White House signing ceremony and the gathering of all these different folks that had been engaged, it was interesting to me to stand in that room with President Trump and to have folks from the Heritage Foundation and folks from the ACLU in the same room shaking hands and smiling and saying that this is a good piece of legislation. In fact, it is the only time that I can remember sitting at a signing ceremony watching people from two different perspectives saying they both support something so strongly. That was the FIRST STEP Act.

I have now seen my second time that that has occurred, when both the Heritage Foundation and the ACLU both oppose S. 1 and H.R. 1. They have both come out in opposition to it.

Well, that is an interesting gathering of folks to be able to gather together from both political extremes to be able to look at a piece of legislation—all 880 pages of it—and to say: That is a bad idea. Why would they say that?

Well, let me count the ways of why they would say that.

In my State in Oklahoma, we have great voting engagement. Good. We want to make it easy to vote. We want to make it hard to cheat. We want as many people as possible to be able to vote and as many people as possible to be able to engage in the process. It is the nature of a Republic like ours. You need people to be able to be engaged. But we also want to be able to follow

up on that process as well, to be able to make sure that if somebody is actually breaking the rules on that, we follow up. And in our State, we do.

Recently, I followed up with our State leadership for voting to be able to find out what happened in our last election and what are we doing. We found 57 people as a State that voted twice in my State. All 57 of those names were turned over to local district attorneys, and they will start following up with those individuals because that is a violation of the law to be able to vote twice in our State. Fifty-seven names is not very many, but it is because we continue to enforce the law in our State to be able to make sure that we have as many people voting as possible but also accountability for people who want to be able to cheat in the system.

The interesting thing about S. 1 and H.R. 1 is that they make it much easier to cheat in the process. They set up a different system where you can actually have no voter ID. And it is not just no voter ID; it is no voter ID and same-day registration combined. So you can literally walk into a polling place that you are not registered for, not show an ID, and say "I am not registered. I would like to vote" and not show an ID and also vote that same day in that spot. There is no way to be able to verify, then, one way or the other if this person is voting twice because no one knows.

In my State that has great voter ID laws, it would gut them, and it would take it away from our State, though no one is complaining about voter ID in my State. You can show an ID. You can show a library card. You can show a utility bill. You can show anything in my State just to be able to verify that is actually you because we want people to be able to vote, but we want to make sure it is that person who is actually voting. That used to be a common, accepted practice.

Why would we want to create an environment where we would make it easy to be able to cheat?

This bill, S. 1, also creates ballot harvesting—forces it around the entire country. Folks may say: I have no idea what that is. Well, let me set up what it is. Ballots are mailed to your house, and if you haven't mailed it back in yet, you may have a knock at your door. They come to your door.

And if they come to the door—it would be a political activist from one of the campaigns, and they would say: Hey, have you filled out your ballot yet? I know they got mailed out yesterday. Have you turned it back in yet?

Oh, you haven't? Grab your ballot inside and bring it out on the front porch, and I will help you fill it out right here on your front porch. And, I tell you what I will do. I will also turn it in for you. You won't even have to mail it. I will deliver it for you.

That is ballot harvesting. In most States, that is illegal. They want to make that legal in every single State. That is an invitation to fraud.

Now, there is a difference between “I want to help facilitate everyone to be able to vote and to be able to protect their right to vote” and actually creating opportunities for fraud where everyone doubts every election. That is not the right way to go. I want to make sure that we all look at an election at the end of it and say we can trust that.

One of the ways we can trust it is through a Federal Election Commission that actually is bipartisan. We have a Federal Election Commission with an even number of Republicans and Democrats. They want to change that to where it is five members, not six, and the last member, who is the tie breaker, is someone selected by the President who would be “independent.” I am sure that is going to work out just fine, but that is not going to end up being a partisan individual.

In my State, all the ballots are done ahead of time—all of them. If you do a mail-in ballot, those ballots are opened up early on. There are Republicans and Democrats. There are poll watchers who are watching it. All of the evaluations for the quality of the ballots are all tested before election night. So that is all finished. So when election night is done, by 10:30 in the evening, all the ballots have been counted and election results are out.

Oh, no, that won't work. My Senate Democratic colleagues want to give an additional 10 days for ballots to continue to trickle in. So, literally, what we had in this last election where it was for days that no one even knew how many ballots were coming in, and the uncertainty that that creates in the process, they want to make sure that exists in every State, not just in a few States.

Listen, I would rather have every State be like mine, to say that everyone has to turn their ballot in early. It is not like election day is a shocking day that no one knew about. In fact, the majority of States around the country are like my State.

This is not just a partisan issue. Vermont has the same rule that we have in Oklahoma. This is a straightforward way to protect the integrity of the ballot, that you can turn in the ballots early, and that you can evaluate all of them so the ballots aren't trickling in for days.

If you love all those rules, let me give you one more quick one. Remember that campaign speech or that campaign commercial that you really, really hate, that you are sick of it by the time the election comes? Well, get ready for a whole lot more of them because the S. 1 bill gives Federal dollars, 6 to 1, to be able to fund more campaigns and to make sure campaigns have even more money.

So if someone raises \$100,000, they are going to give—Federal tax dollars—\$600,000 to that candidate, even a candidate you didn't vote for and don't like. They are going to get \$600,000 for every \$100,000. If they raise \$1 million

for their campaign, they will get \$6 million of our Federal tax dollars.

I don't want to pay for campaigns I don't agree with. I don't think that is the right way to go. And I don't bump into many people in my State that get real excited about paying for someone else's campaign whom they disagree with.

I think this bill was the result of the 2020 election. They pulled it out and said: That election was such a sham-bles. We need to be able to put a bill out there to do that.

But you would be incorrect. Actually, this bill is exactly what they pulled out in 2017, saying that Russia took over the election in 2016 and so we need a big bill to be able to fix it. And for 4 years they have been pushing it and, now, after this election, they pulled it out again and said: We have to be able to do this.

It is the same bill. It used to be the bill to fight Russia. Now it is the bill to be able to fight whatever now.

Listen, let each State make those decisions, and when there is a challenge for that, take it to Federal court. That is why we have the court system. Allow those Federal courts to process through those challenges.

We want every person to be able to be protected, to be able to vote, and if some State is suppressing the vote, take that to Federal court, and let's solve that and make sure that does not occur. But don't tell everyone in my State that Washington, DC knows better.

We have Republicans and Democrats that have worked very hard on election law in my State. In fact, there was just an expansion of additional days for early voting in my State. It has been a nonpartisan issue in my State. Let's not make it a partisan issue now and tell everyone across the entire country that DC knows best. Let's put this bill aside and not pass the S. 1 bill.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

BACK TO WORK BONUS ACT

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, you know, if there is one thing I have been hearing from my constituents lately it is this: We have to get people back to work so our economy can thrive and our people can make a living.

This isn't a new sentiment. I have heard this for months as I have traveled around the State. But what is new is the fact that we can't find people to work, and that is what I am here to talk about today.

Before the pandemic hit, we had the best economy in decades. The unemployment rate in January 2020 was 3.6 percent. Wages were up. Blue-collar wages were rising faster than white-collar wages for the first time on record. Unemployment for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans was at the lowest rate recorded, all thanks to President Trump's pro-growth policies and Republicans' tax reform law.

There is no debating that the coronavirus pandemic hit our economy very, very hard. Many companies and businesses in Alabama, including family-owned small businesses, have spent the past year hanging on by a thread as the pandemic held its tight grip around the country.

Some States opened with a skeleton crew, making the decision to lay off workers in order just to keep operating, and some were forced to shut down entirely. Either way, American workers lost out. A few industries were spared, and unemployment numbers shot sky high.

But a year later, as vaccines became widely available and we better understood what we needed to do to keep Americans safe, many job creators thought: OK, this is when the tight grip loosens, and there is the light at the end of the tunnel.

As more and more people are feeling safe—safe to go places they used to go and do things—businesses are eager to open and respond but, today, even as vaccinations go up and cases go down, the Biden administration is incentivizing people to sit on the sidelines, instead of encouraging them to join the workforce.

It is the opposite of what the Federal Government should be doing: Do the right thing now. And it is the opposite of what job creators want to do for millions of American workers. There are roughly 8.1 million job openings around our country, as we speak, but the Democrats would rather discourage folks from seizing the opportunity to go out and earn a living. That is exactly what the current unemployment payments do.

As part of their partisan stimulus bill, Democrats extended the \$300 a week Federal unemployment benefit, a weekly payment, in addition to the State benefit that folks already get.

In Alabama, people could choose to receive, with no strings attached, up to \$678 per week. That comes out to \$16.95 an hour, which is even more than our Democrat colleagues' job-killing \$15 minimum wage proposal just a few weeks ago. The result has been disastrous for small businesses across my State and throughout the country that are already ready to hire to meet the boom and demand for products and services.

On the national level, here is what the National Federation of Independent Business reported: “Unfilled job openings continue to mount, as April is the third consecutive month setting a record high reading of unfilled job openings.”

On record job openings, April job numbers released last week weren't much better. The unemployment rate went up by 0.1 percent. Economists thought we would add 1 million jobs, but we only added a quarter of that amount.

Small business owners all across Alabama have been able to reopen, and customers are coming back. Now they

need people to fill the jobs to keep the doors open.

Across America, businesses are no longer competing against other businesses. Now they have to compete against the government—government versus the private sector—and the government is stacking the deck against our small businesses and manufacturers. Businesses in Alabama are no exception to anybody else across the country.

Case in point, Al Cason is the President of Bud's Best Cookies in Hoover, AL. His father Bud owns the company and has been in the industry for 65 years. Normally, they have four production lines with two shifts, but because so many—so many—of their would-be workers are staying home, they can only run two lines, and they are cutting their production in half. We can't get enough to come to work, Al wrote me. The government is taking away workers from our business, and it has been in business for 65 years.

Wesley Averett from Enterprise Health & Rehabilitation Center in Enterprise, AL, wrote that his long-term care facility is "unable to find the help [they] need" due to the "severe negative impacts stimulus and unemployment payments are [having] on the Alabama workforce."

And then there is Sandra Walker from Lake Haven Assisted Living in Luverne, AL, who said:

Our salaries are competitive, but we can't compete with stay-at-home . . . no strings attached hand outs. . . . Business is back open but we can't survive without our workers returning to work.

These are both health companies, mind you, and they are the ones helping some of our most vulnerable citizens.

And here is what Anita Hilliard in Courtland, AL, told me. The company she works for employs people in convenience stores throughout northwest Alabama. She wrote: "We have had to shut down some of our shifts" just because we can't get enough people to work, and sometimes we have to shut down completely.

But here is what really stuck with me in her letter. She said: "I am working and paying taxes to pay others more than I make myself." That is sad. This must end or we will lose the America that we have grown to know and love.

I couldn't agree with Anita more. America was built by hard workers, people like Al, people like Anita, people like Wes, Sandra, and millions more across the United States. But we will never jumpstart our economy if we keep going with this bad policy of incentivizing people to stay at home and sit and not work, rather than take employment opportunities when they are offered to them.

Our businesses need workers to meet customers' demands. This is truly a great thing after such a hard year. Our job creators have started to hope and see opportunity again. They have hung

the "now hiring" signs on the door. They have posted the job openings. But we need to encourage folks to rejoin the workforce and to get back to work. Job creators are creating the opportunity. We just need folks to reach out and take it.

It should be easy for us to offer encouragement to folks to fill open positions. All we have to do is kick the ball through the uprights this time around. But Democrats in DC wanted to go it alone. They wanted to go it alone a few weeks ago. And with the recent stimulus bill that we passed we ended up with a workforce shortage due to the inflated unemployment benefits in an economy on the cusp of recovery that needs available workers.

Getting these folks back to work isn't just about the now. It is about helping them to see the future again. It has been more than a year for many who have been out of work. Taking the leap to get back in sometimes is scary, but we have to help the people take that leap. If we wait, these businesses and jobs they are now offering right now may not be there in September. Companies and small businesses are going out of work and going out of business.

That is why I joined my colleagues, Senator CRAPO and Senator RISCH, to sponsor the Back to Work Bonus Act. This bill would give back-to-work bonuses to workers who are able to safely return to work. This would be a one-time payment of \$1,200 for those returning to full-time jobs and \$600 to those returning to part-time jobs. Employers would verify the earnings and hours of those receiving the back-to-work bonuses. That sounds much more like an actual stimulus to me.

The Back to Work Bonus Act is a win-win-win—good for workers, good for employers, and great for our society. I am sure each of my colleagues has received similar pleas from small business owners across their State.

The Biden-backed unemployment benefits are crushing their hopes of getting back to a prepandemic high. We are even seeing some States take matters into their own hands. Earlier this week, I was glad to see Alabama be one of the first States to announce plans to stop accepting enhanced Federal unemployment benefits. As of today, at least 16 States have announced they won't accept the benefit to help employers and encourage folks to get back to work. This is a common-sense move to encourage folks to take the many job opportunities available.

Well, I, for one, think we should listen to the folks on Main Street. We can help them, and we can help millions of the unemployed. One way to do it is by passing the Back to Work Bonus Act.

I urge my colleagues to support this practical bill and get our country back to work. We need to remember: Opportunity through work is the foundation of our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

HONORING DEPUTY WYATT CHRISTOPHER MASER

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, every year, the Senate unanimously passes a resolution honoring each law enforcement officer who died in the line of duty during the previous year. Their names are also added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC. Currently, this memorial contains more than 21,000 names. This year, one more Idahoan will be added to this memorial.

Wyatt Christopher Maser was born April 19, 1997, in Thermopolis, WY, to Christopher Michael Maser and Sandra Lorene Reid Arnold. After growing up in Casper, WY, Wyatt joined the U.S. Air Force, serving as a senior airman from 2015 to 2018.

After returning to his home and marrying the love of his life, Paige, Wyatt began his career in law enforcement, moving to Idaho Falls, ID, and joining the Bonneville County Sheriff's Office and graduating from the Idaho Law Enforcement Academy in 2019. Shortly before graduating, he and Paige welcomed a beautiful baby daughter, Morgan Emily.

He served as a sheriff's deputy with Bonneville County Sheriff's Office for 13 months. At the graveside service honoring his life, his career was characterized in two words: "friendship" and "service."

It takes a special person to serve in our Nation's Armed Forces and an even better one to continue to serve one's community after leaving the Air Force. By all accounts, Wyatt was that person, befriending everyone he met.

On May 18, 2020, while attempting to help a woman in mental crisis in the middle of Bone Road, he was struck by another deputy's vehicle and was pronounced dead at Eastern Idaho Medical Center.

Wyatt left behind his wife, Paige; his young daughter, Morgan; his mother and stepfather, Sandy and Bill Arnold; his father and stepmother, Chris and Cheryl Maser; his siblings, Cole, Taylor, Jesse, and Alexys; and grandparents, uncles, and pets galore.

The Law Enforcement Officers Memorial preserves Wyatt's name in stone. Yet Deputy Maser was so much more than an Air Force veteran and a law enforcement officer. An avid waterfowl hunter, Wyatt and his fellow members of the Delta Waterfowl Snake River Chapter were building a hunting blind for disabled hunters to help those with limitations enjoy the pastime he loved so much. That blind is still being completed and will be named the "Maser Blind" in his memory.

Deputy Maser, your memory will not be forgotten.

To Paige and Morgan, I am so sorry for your loss, and thank you for the opportunity to join in honoring Wyatt.

The Book of Isaiah, chapter 6, verse 8, states:

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."

Sheriff's Deputy Wyatt Christopher Maser answered that call with the ultimate sacrifice, and for that, we say thank you.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WALDWIN). The senior Senator from Alaska.

ALASKA TOURISM RECOVERY ACT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of S. 593 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 593) to restrict the imposition by the Secretary of Homeland Security of fines, penalties, duties, or tariffs applicable only to coastwise voyages, or prohibit otherwise qualified non-United States citizens from serving as crew, on specified vessels transporting passengers between the State of Washington and the State of Alaska, to address a Canadian cruise ship ban and the extraordinary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Alaskan communities, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Murkowski amendment at the desk be agreed to and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 1492) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

[Purpose: In the nature of a substitute]

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Alaska Tourism Restoration Act".

SEC. 2. VOYAGE DEEMED TO BE FOREIGN.

(a) DEFINITION OF COVERED CRUISE SHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term "covered cruise ship" means a vessel included on the list under paragraph (2) that—

(A) has been issued, operates in accordance with, and retains a COVID-19 Conditional Sailing Certificate of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

(B) operates in accordance with any restrictions or guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention associated with such Certificate, including any such restrictions or guidance issued after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) LIST.—The vessels listed under this paragraph are the following:

(A) Carnival Freedom (IMO number 9333149).

(B) Carnival Miracle (IMO number 9237357).

(C) Crystal Serenity (IMO number 9243667).

(D) Discovery Princess (IMO number 9837468).

(E) Emerald Princess (IMO number 9333151).

(F) Eurodam (IMO number 9378448).

(G) Golden Horizon (IMO number 9793545).

(H) Grand Princess (IMO number 9104005).

(I) Hanseatic Inspiration (IMO number 9817145).

(J) Koningsdam (IMO number 9692557).

(K) NG Quest (IMO number 9798985).

(L) NG Sea Bird (IMO number 8966444).

(M) NG Sea Lion (IMO number 8966456).

(N) NG Venture (IMO number 9799044).

(O) Nieuw Amsterdam (IMO number 9378450).

(P) Noordam (IMO number 9230115).

(Q) Zuiderdam (IMO number 9221279).

(R) Majestic Princess (IMO number 9614141).

(S) Ovation of the Seas (IMO number 9697753).

(T) Radiance of the Seas (IMO number 9195195).

(U) Serenade of the Seas (IMO number 9228344).

(V) Eclipse (IMO number 9404314).

(W) Millennium (IMO number 9189419).

(X) Solstice (IMO number 9362530).

(Y) Norwegian Bliss (IMO number 9751509).

(Z) Norwegian Encore (IMO number 9751511).

(AA) Norwegian Jewel (IMO number 9304045).

(BB) Norwegian Spirit (IMO number 9141065).

(CC) Norwegian Sun (IMO number 9218131).

(DD) Ocean Victory (IMO number 9868869).

(EE) Pacific Princess (IMO number 9187887).

(FF) Pacific World (IMO number 9000259).

(GG) Quantum of the Seas (IMO number 9549463).

(HH) Queen Elizabeth (IMO number 9477438).

(II) Disney Wonder (IMO number 9126819).

(JJ) Regatta (IMO number 9156474).

(KK) Roald Amundsen (IMO number 9813072).

(LL) Ruby Princess (IMO number 9378462).

(MM) Sapphire Princess (IMO number 9228186).

(NN) Scenic Eclipse (IMO number 9797371).

(OO) Seabourn Odyssey (IMO number 9417086).

(PP) Seabourn Venture 2 (IMO number 9862023).

(QQ) Seven Seas Mariner (IMO number 9210139).

(RR) Silver Shadow (IMO number 9192167).

(SS) Silver Wind (IMO number 8903935).

(TT) Star Breeze (IMO number 8807997).

(UU) Sylvia Earle (IMO number 9872327).

(VV) Westerdam (IMO number 9226891).

(WW) L'Austral (IMO number 9502518).

(XX) Silver Muse (IMO number 9784350).

(YY) Viking Orion (IMO number 9796250).

(b) CRITERIA.—A roundtrip voyage of a covered cruise ship transporting passengers between a port or place in the State of Alaska and a port or place in the State of Washington shall be deemed to have made a stop in a port or place of Canada, and deemed a foreign voyage, for purposes of the law of the United States, if—

(1) during the voyage, the covered cruise ship sends an email containing the information described in subsection (c) to—

(A) the Canada Border Services Agency;

(B) the Commissioner of Customs and Border Protection; and

(C) each alien crewman on such voyage who is in possession of a valid, unexpired nonimmigrant visa issued pursuant to subparagraph (C) or (D) of section 101(a)(15) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)); and

(2) the voyage begins not later than February 28, 2022.

(c) EMAIL.—An email described in subsection (b)(1) shall contain the names of each alien crewman described in subparagraph (C) of such subsection.

(d) EMPLOYMENT OF ALIEN CREWMEN.—On the date on which a covered cruise ship sends an email to the Canada Border Services Agency in accordance with subsection (b)(1), each alien crewman described in subparagraph (C) of such subsection shall be deemed to have departed the United States, entered Canada, and been readmitted to the United States for purposes of complying with, during the applicable voyage described in subsection (b), the 29-day authorized stay pursuant to subparagraph (C) or (D) of section 101(a)(15) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)).

(e) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), a voyage described in such subsection shall not be deemed a foreign voyage for purposes of section 446 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1446) or any other provision of law relating to levying duties or taxes on goods, including consumables, purchased for use onboard the covered cruise ship.

(f) APPLICABILITY.—This section shall not apply to a roundtrip voyage during any period for which the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued an order under section 361 or 365 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 264 and 268) that requires covered cruise ships to suspend vessel operations.

(g) DURATION.—The authority provided under this section shall terminate on the earlier of—

(1) the date on which covered cruise ships are no longer prohibited by the Government of Canada, any political subdivision of Canada, or any port or province of Canada, from entering, berthing, or docking in Canadian waters of the Pacific Coast due to the COVID-19 pandemic; or

(2) March 31, 2022.

SEC. 3. MEDICAL AND SAFETY STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 35 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 3510. Additional medical and safety standards

"(a) AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and other appropriate Federal agencies, shall promulgate regulations to—

"(1) require that the owner of a vessel to which section 3507 applies install, and maintain in working order, automated external defibrillators on such vessel;

"(2) require that such defibrillators be placed throughout such vessel in clearly designated locations;

"(3) require that such defibrillators are available for passenger and crew access in the event of an emergency; and

"(4) require that automated external defibrillators, or adjacent equipment, allow passengers and crew to easily contact medical staff of the vessel.

"(b) DEFINITION OF OWNER.—In this section, the term 'owner' has the meaning given such term in section 3507."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 35 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"Sec. 3510. Additional medical and safety standards."

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the bill?